

General Nielsen named commander of AFRL

by Vicki Stein, AFRL Headquarters

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AFB, OHIO — Brigadiere General Paul D. Nielsen, who has served as Vice Commander, Aeronautical Systems Center since June 1999 has been named commander of the Air Force Research Laboratory, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio replacing Maj. Gen. Richard "Dick" Paul.

Nielsen will succeed Maj. Gen. Richard R. Paul, who is retiring effective June 1 after a 33-year military career. Paul became the first AFRL commander when the organization was established in October 1997.

As AFRL commander, Nielsen will direct the Air Force's annual \$2.2 billion science and technology program which is executed by more than 5,800 people in the laboratory's component technology directorates and the Air Force Office of Scientific Research. The Air Force Research Laboratory plans, manages and conducts research and development activities for the Air Force to advance the entire range of aerospace and interrelated technologies.

General Nielsen will also serve as the Air Force's technology executive officer. In that position, he will determine the investment strategy for the full spectrum of Air Force science and technology activities.

Prior to his assignment as Vice Commander at ASC, Nielsen was named a command director of the North American Aerospace Defense Command Combat Operations Staff at the Cheyenne Mountain Air Station, Colorado Springs, Colo. He was named chief of Operations for the Cheyenne Mountain Operations Center in October 1996 and, beginning in May 1997, served as director of plans, Headquarters North American Aerospace Defense Command at Peterson Air Force Base, Colo. Nielsen served as Rome Laboratory commander from July 1992 through March 1995.

Nielsen is a native of New Orleans, La., and a distinguished graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy with bachelor of science degrees in physics and mathematics. He earned a master of science degree in applied physics at the Livermore campus of the University of California, Davis, as a Hertz Foundation fellow. He returned to Livermore, again as a Hertz Foundation fellow, and was awarded his doctorate in plasma physics from the University of California, Davis, in 1981. He also holds a master's of business administration degree from the University of New Mexico and is a graduate of National War College. @